

REMARKS

The typographical error in the Abstract has been corrected.

The specification and claims have been amended to avoid minor drawing changes. More particularly “nylon 6” has been changed to NYLON. It should be noted that nylon 6 is a common type of nylon.

The term --opening-- has been inserted after “sight windows” in the specification both to provide better terminology correspondence and to make it clear that the sight windows, or openings are clearly illustrated in such as in Figures 2, 4, 5 or 6. Additions to the drawings in this regard are not required.

To avoid two dotted lines in the drawings to show the angle range of original claim 9, the claim has been changed to --about 30°--.

Claim 1 has been amended for clarity to set forth that it is the tip of the conductor to which visual access is provided by the transparent cover. It also provides a better antecedent for the “tip” of claim 2.

Claim 11 has been amended to make it clearer that the abutment is a blocking abutment at the inner end of each connection socket to ensure proper insertion and to prevent over insertion. These clarifying changes are supported in the original specification (page 7, lines 16, and 23) and in the original claims (see preceding claim 10).

Claim 16 has been amended to correct the antecedent variance and now recites the top of the case rather than the cover.

Also, claim 17 now includes the term --additional-- before “respective ports” to make it clear that it is not the same ports of the prior claim.

Finally, method claim 22 has been amended for clarity to make clearer that the one or more tap connections are added uniformly after the case is closed.

With the above, the objections to the specification, certain claims and the drawings are believed overcome.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected claim 11 as anticipated by Linn 3,725,851, apparently referring to the small unnumbered and unmentioned step at the inner end of the bottom tier of connection ports. The unmentioned small step seems a manufacturing afterthought, or perhaps a manufacturing tolerance problem since the ports of the top tier have no such step.

Also, it is apparent that for such step to act as an abutment or stop, the added conductor would have to be about the same size as the port and the end would have to be straight. Neither of course represents the real world. Wire ends are seldom perfectly straight and with wires already in and projecting from the upper tier, even in Linn the operator is going to want to insert the wire end beyond the small step just to see it. So when the screw clamps down on insulation, weeks or months later somebody is stuck trying to find out why one of the circuits isn't working.

As is clear from claim 11, as clarified, Applicant's construction provides a stop or abutment to ensure uniform connections. In Linn, the illustrated step seems less than a quarter of the diameter of the lower tier ports only. While in applicant's block all of the ports have an abutment or stop wall which is more than half the diameter.

Linn doesn't disclose a cover and has no wire tip stop which would ensure uniform insertions and connections.

Claims 22-25 have been rejected as unpatentable over Linn even though the Examiner readily acknowledges that "Linn does not describe the method as claimed". The rejection by inference isn't covered by the statute, Rules, or Manual, and reconsideration is in order.

The shotgun rejection on EP 1107363A1 isn't understood. This publication issued as a patent in Europe and it was extended to the U.K. So an English language version is available. For the Examiner's convenience a copy is enclosed. It is suggested that future reference be to this English language version.

While this reference does show a case it doesn't show a transparent window, nor does it show an abutment wall at the inner end of each socket for uniform connections. Item 7 is a hole or port for the main connections, it is blocked when the connections are made, and it's in the wrong wall to provide visual access to the tips of the added conductors.

The Examiner's application of the reference goes on some two pages and ends with the *In re Morris* citation. While that case may refer to claim language, it says nothing about reference distortion.

It's as though the Examiner is viewing the reference through a looking glass and puts one in mind of the discourse between Alice and Humpty Dumpty.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more or less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all."

An anticipation requires that the prior art reference must either expressly or inherently disclose each and every limitation in a claim. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co.*, 2 USPQ 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987); *In re Paulsen*, 31 USPQ 2d 1671, 1673 (Fed. Cir. 1994). The reference must also be enabling such that it puts the invention in the hands of one skilled in the art. *In re Sun*,

31 USPQ 2d 1451, 1453 (Fed. Cir. 1993) (unpub.); *In re Spada*, 15 USPQ 2d 1655, 1657 (Fed. Cir. 1991). Not only is all of the structure required, but also each statement of function. *In re Weiss*, 26 USPQ 2d 1885, 1888 (Fed. Cir. 1993), which cites two CCPA cases to this effect:

The limitations which must be met by an anticipatory reference are those set forth in each statement of function. *RCA*, 730 F.2d at 1445 N.5, 221 USPQ at 389 n.5 (citing *In re Mott*, 557 F.2d 266, 194 USPQ 305, 307 (CCPA 1977)).

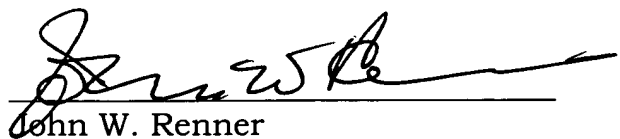
The Examiner is also invited to review Section 2131 of MPEP, entitled "ANTICIPATION--APPLICATION OF 35 U.S.C. 102(a), (b) and (e)."

Applicant's claims are not anticipated by the European reference and are patentable over that reference.

In the absence of further pertinent art this application is submitted as in condition for final allowance and early action to that effect is solicited.

Should any deficiencies or overpayments occur in the filing fees of the subject amendment, authorization is hereby given to charge Deposit Account Number 18-0988.

Respectfully submitted,



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